

they may have in the future for such benefits as will be of most use to members of the nursing profession, they will be able themselves to vote and decide what additional benefits shall be given to members who are sick and in trouble, old and past work, or who are in temporary distress. Our contributions will not be deflected into channels which, though no doubt most useful, do not primarily concern ourselves.

There is not the slightest doubt but that when the Bill is passed all members of the nursing profession, probationers as well as certificated nurses, will have to pay, and my advice is strongly to make no attempt to contract out, nor to have the subscription reduced by a few dribblets, but to claim the whole amount, pool all our money together, and the nursing profession will be, collectively, financially sound and able to help its members in distress as it has never been able to help them in the past. Perhaps I am a little sanguine, but I should say that in time the funds of such a society would be very large indeed, and would place the genuine nurse in genuine distress above the need of applying for help and succour outside the boundary of her own society—of course, that would be in the future. The officers of the society would be appointed and paid by the nurses solely for themselves and their benefit. In fact they would be the financial guardians of the nursing interest. That I am not exaggerating when I suggest that in a few years the sum at the disposal of a nurses' friendly society would be large, I may cite my own case. During the 29 years I have belonged to the Nursing Profession I should have paid in to the fund, through myself and employers, £37 14s., exclusive of the Government contribution and interest; from this I should have drawn, when a probationer, one month's sick pay, *i.e.*, £1 10s., the rest of my money would have been pure gain for the society. Or to put it another way, a Home of fifty private nurses would pay (exclusive of the Government grant) £65 in one year; it would have to be a year of exceptional sickness amongst them to consume anything like that amount. No, the great point for nurses to aim at is undoubtedly to have the management of their own contributions in their own hands, so that they may be husbanded and dealt with in such a manner as to make the genuine distressed nurse a thing of the past. Forced insurance is a trial, a great trial to many of us, but as we have to face it, let us turn it to something that will raise and solidify our profession, and relieve those amongst us who dread working incapacity from their worst fears.

To test the demand of nurses in favour of a self-governed Approved Society of their own, I am prepared to receive the names of nurses who are willing to join such a Society, if founded on a sound financial basis. Will those nurses who are in favour of this suggestion, which in no way fetters their future action, send a post-card to this effect without delay, addressed to Miss Mollett, Nurses' Protection Committee, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

M. MOLLETT.

THE NURSES' PROTECTION COMMITTEE.

An open meeting for nurses will be held at 8 p.m., at Morley Hall, 25 and 26, George Street, Hanover Square, London, W., on January 18th, 1912:—To receive a Report of the work of the Nurses' Protection Committee concerning the National Insurance Bill. Miss M. Mollett will give an Address on "A Professional Nurses' Friendly Society," to be followed by discussion. The Chair will be taken by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Chairman of the Protection Committee.

THE ROYAL NATIONAL PENSION FUND AND NURSES' INSURANCE.

The Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses (and, it should be added, for "all responsible paid officials connected with hospitals and kindred institutions") is circularising its members in connection with the National Insurance Bill, and inviting nurses who do not hold pension policies in the Fund to apply for information as to its proposals for the future, which will be supplied "free of charge."

We await the issue of the scheme to comment on it in detail, but we desire at once to point out to nurses that in any society which includes men—and male attendants, male officials, and, presumably, hospital porters, are eligible for membership of the R.N.P.F.N. and therefore of its Approved Society—they must remember (1) that insured men will, under the Act, receive a higher sum than women, and also the Fund will have to provide the maternity benefit for the wives of married men. Trained women nurses will do well before joining any Approved Society which admits both men and women to consider whether they would not be wise to form a Society for which only trained women nurses and pupils in training shall be eligible.

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